

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6817

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CFED, PER, IS

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR FEDERAL BENEFITS LOCAL POSITION

1. THE EMBASSY URGENTLY REQUESTS EMERGENCY ALLOCATION OF ONE ADDITIONAL FSL POSITION IN THE CONSULAR SECTION'S FEDERAL BENEFITS UNIT. IN NOVEMBER 1976 POST INITIATED SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMS TAKING. AN HEW-FUNDED POSITION WAS ALLOCATED OT THE POST IN ANTICIPATION OF THE WORKLOAD WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM THIS CLAIMS TAKING OPERATION. HOWEVER, EXPERIENCE DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS HAS PROVEN THAT THE CLAIMS TAKING WORKLOAD IS APPROXIMATELY DOUBLE THAT INITIALLY PROJECTED BY THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION. IT WAS ORIGINALLY PROJECTED THAT A TOTAL OF APPROXIMATELY 30 SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMS PER MONTH WOULD BE PROCESSED BY THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF FEDERAL BENEFITS UNITS IN BOTH TEL AVIV AND JERUSALEM. ALTHOUGH THE FEDERAL BENEFITS UNIT IN TEL AVIV SERVES APPROXIMATELY 75 PER CENT OF THE FEDERAL BENEFICIARIES IN THE COMBINED TEL AVIV/JERUSALEM SERVICE AREA, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMS PROCESSED BY TEL AVIV ALONE IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS HAS EXCEEDED THAT PROJECTED FOR THE TWO COMBINED SERVICE AREAS. AT THE PRESENT TIME TEL AVIV IS PROCESSING APPROXIMATELY 35 CLAIMS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS PER MONTH. IN ADDITION, THE REQUESTS FOR SERVICES FROM ALL FEDERAL BENEFIT PAYING AGENCIES HAS

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INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS. FOR SSA ALONE THE POST HAS PROCESSED APPROXIMATELY 250 ASSISTANCE REQUESTS SINCE NOVEMBER 30, 1976. AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE ARE 110 ASSISTANCE REQUESTS PENDING FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION; OVER HALF OF THESE HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN THE PAST 30 DAYS.

2. IN THE PAST THE TWO EMPLOYEES HANDLING NOTARIAL AND SPECIAL CONSULAR SERVICES DEVOTED APPROXIMATELY 25 PERCENT AND 50 PERCENT OF THEIR TIME, RESPECTIVELY, TO FEDERAL BENEFITS WORK. HOWEVER, INCREASES IN THE WORKLOAD OF THESE TWO AREAS NO LONGER ALLOW THESE EMPLOYEES TO DEVOTE ANY TIME TO FEDERAL BENEFITS WORK AND TO PERFORM THEIR PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES. AS RECENT CONSULAR PACKAGES REFLECT, THERE HAVE BEEN DRAMATIC INCREASES IN ALL ASPECTS OF CONSULAR SERVICES WITH NO INCREASE IN STAFF WHATSOEVER. FOR EXAMPLE, DURING THE PERIOD FY 1969 THROUGH FY 1976 NOTARIAL SERVICES INCREASED BY OVER 100 PERCENT; WELFARE AND PROTECTION CASES INCREASED BY OVER 150 PERCENT; AND THE NUMBER OF FEDERAL BENEFIT CHECKS DISTRIBUTED BY THE POST INCREASED BY OVER 300 PERCENT. ANOTHER NOTABLE FACTOR IS THAT THE NUMBER OF FEDERAL BENEFICIARIES RESIDING IN ISRAEL IS INCREASING AT AN ANNUAL RATE OF APPROXIMATELY 9.5 PERCENT AND IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO INCREASE AT THIS RATE. THE CURRENT CONSULAR STAFF CAN NO LONGER ADEQUATELY COPE WITH CURRENT WORKLOADS AND EVER-INCREASING BACKLOGS. IF THE POST IS TO CONTINUE WITH THE SSA CLAIMS TAKING OPERATION TO WHICH THE DEPARTMENT IS FORMALLY COMMITTED, AND TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE OR NOMINAL PUBLIC SERVICES TO FEDERAL BENEFICIARIES, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT AN ADDITIONAL POSITION BE ALLOCATED IMMEDIATELY. THE REGIONAL FEDERAL BENEFITS COORDINATOR, AT PRESENT VISITING THE POST, HAS REVIEWED CURRENT OPERATIONS AND PENDING WORKLOAD OF THE FEDERAL BENEFITS UNIT

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AND FULLY CONCURS WITH THIS RECOMMENDATION.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
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